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Lessons From Kosovo: The KFOR Experience

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CHAPTER XXII

Information Campaign

Larry Wentz

Information Operations

Information operations, led by KFOR headquarters, was essentially an information campaign that supported the KFOR mission and promoted the successes and credibility of UNMIK and KFOR in Kosovo. The Multinational Brigades' information operations took on different forms—there was no consistency in implementation across KFOR and the MNBs. In the U.S.-led sector, the U.S. concept of information operations as an integrating strategy drove MNB(E) information operations. It was therefore an effort to integrate the activities of various commanders, staff elements, and soldiers from the MNB(E) headquarters and subordinate U.S. and multinational battalion forces.

The lack of a strategic end state for Kosovo and overarching strategic plan to guide and help synchronize the information operations efforts resulted in multiple and loosely connected information campaigns occurring simultaneously in Kosovo. Information operations were still in its formative stages in NATO, so doctrine differed.

MNB(E), and the U.S. element in particular, was the most proactive in implementing information operations as an integration strategy. The approach employed was more than simply a public information campaign. There were both offensive and defensive aspects to MNB(E) information operations. The defensive aspects included operation security (OPSEC), information assurance and protection, and monitoring disinformation and propaganda. A Field Support Team (FST) from the U.S. Army Land Information Warfare Activity (LIWA) was used to support conducting information operations efforts in the MNB(E) region. The LIWA FSTs primary functions were planning, targeting,

overseeing, monitoring information operations execution, and conducting information operations assessments for the brigade. U.S. Army tactical information operations doctrine was the basis for the intelligence preparation of the information environment. This supported the military decisionmaking process, targeting process, and execution of operations by centralized planning and decentralized execution. The 1st ID and 1st AD had different approaches for executing information operations. The 1st ID used the LIWA FST team chief as the MNB(E) IO officer and at the battalion level, IO was just one more duty assignment. With 1 AD deployment, the Deputy Fire Support coordinator was appointed MNB(E) IO officer and the battalion Fire Support officers were appointed IO officers. This action provided a technical hierarchy as well as chain of command to ensure that the information operations tasks and responsibilities were executed.

Information operations in Kosovo strove to garner international support, influence essential Kosovo decisionmakers, and shape the local attitudes to behave in manners that supported KFOR soldiers and operations. The effort focused on providing operationally relevant information to leaders and the population, rather than managing perceptions. KFOR relied on Public Information, PSYOP, civil-military cooperation, and the Joint Implementation Commission. The MNB(E) information operations weapons of choice were the maneuver battalions, public information, PSYOP, civil affairs, special operations, and the JIC. Special services such as military escorts for Serbs, MEDCAPS, and DENCAPS were employed as well. KFOR use of disinformation, propaganda, and deception were not allowed, but this did not necessarily apply to national campaigns. Only white PSYOP was employed by KFOR and there was no counterpropaganda campaign in spite of extensive use of propaganda by the Serbs. Disinformation and propaganda flowed into the sector from various sources, including media sources within Kosovo as well as external to the province in Serbia and Albania. Word of mouth from travelers throughout the region and sector constituted a large source of disinformation. Propaganda in Kosovo tended to be very simplistic and obviously contrived. Serbian propaganda lacked credibility with the local population, especially ethnic Albanians. There was also disinformation on the Internet. KLA-FOR Online (<http://www.kfor-online.com/>) was an example of a Web site that was a spoof of the KFOR and NATO official Web sites. It depicted the U.N. SRSG and the NATO Secretary General as Nazis, and lauded the

successes of the Albanians with NATO's help to get rid of the Serbs in Kosovo. Direct refutation of propaganda only served to give it credibility. Instead, the KFOR campaign targeted areas such as promoting a safe and secure environment, deterring violence and criminal activities, encouraging a free and open society, promoting a positive UNMIK and KFOR image, and mine and UXO awareness. The target population was mainly 20 to 50 year olds and was a mix of Romas, Turks, Albanians, and Serbs. In Bosnia, the German PSYOP product *MIRKO* specifically targeted teenagers and was one of the more successful products produced by the IFOR/SFOR information campaign. There was no such product for Kosovo and little effort addressed teenager needs.

When I visited the KFOR information operations cell in Pristina in June, COL Bill Carter, U.S. Air Force, had just taken over. The activities of the KFOR information operations cell focused on planning, coordinating, collecting data, and analyzing the effectiveness of the KFOR information campaign. The information operations cell was also responsible for assessing all information-related activities of the KFOR headquarters operation and advising COMKFOR accordingly when conflicts arose, or if there was a possibility of improper use or release of information. The information operations cell reported to the Assistant Chief of Staff for operations and consisted of a PSYOP support element and an IO coordination section that consisted of current operations and long range planning.

There was a KFOR Joint Information Strategy cell, consisting of the IO cell and the Combined Public Information Center (also referred to as the Coalition Press Information Center or CPIC). The strategy cell brainstormed with the KFOR CJ heads to find avenues, methods, and messages for executing the information campaign. One of the concerns at the time was the inability to convey information, since the Kosovo national information infrastructure was dysfunctional. They focused on areas such as promoting KFOR successes, democratization, refugee returns, and law and order.

There were several KFOR working groups used to coordinate information operations activities. A weekly KFOR headquarters information operations working group meeting was held at the Humanitarian Community Information Center in Pristina with UNMIK and NGOs. There were two weekly working groups held with the MNBs

where NGOs were also invited, but usually did not attend. The chief of the KFOR information operations cell sponsored one of the weekly information operations working group (IOWG) meeting that rotated among the KFOR and MNB headquarters locations. The other was a PSYOP working group that met after the information operations working group. The KFOR IOWG was used as a way to facilitate KFOR-MNB collaboration and coordination, share insights on activities being pursued, share information operations tactics, and to deconflict activities where possible. In reality, the working groups focused on consensus building rather than directives, and MNBs only shared some the things they were doing in their sectors. The meetings also provided an opportunity for the KFOR and MNB information operations team leaders to network.

I had the opportunity to attend the KFOR IOWG held the first week of June at MNB(S) headquarters in Prizren. Participants included U.S., UK, Germany, France, Italy, and Spain. The main subjects of the meeting were the upcoming local celebrations being planned for the anniversary of KFOR, safety of the local population (particularly children), and the registration progress. COMKFOR instructed the MNBs not to participate in any anniversary celebration that was not sponsored by KFOR or UNMIK. Two official activities were scheduled, one of which was a June 11 UNMIK-sponsored celebration at the headquarters building in Pristina. On June 12, there would be a joint UNMIK and KFOR press conference where there would be a presentation on UNMIK-KFOR activities, short statements by the U.N. SRSG and COMKFOR, and a Q&A session. The KFOR 1st Anniversary information campaign, which was still in development, would focus on informing the public of KFOR and UNMIK accomplishments. The MNBs were requested to provide KFOR vignettes on accomplishments in their region. The safety campaign had several aspects. The new Kosovar passenger train service would be opening in June and there would be a charge. The information campaign needed to make the public aware of this, but more importantly, to make the children aware of the train operation since they played frequently on the tracks. With school ending for the summer, COMKFOR was concerned about children's safety from cars and landmines. The campaigns continued to emphasize road safety and mine awareness. The registration was moving too slowly, so the OSCE asked KFOR to help inform the public by putting up OSCE produced election posters in the Serbian enclaves. An OSCE contractor would take care of the

rest of Kosovo. KFOR would be putting an information campaign package together with the help of MNB(E) to address freedom of movement for Serbs, mine awareness, and the registration process. The rest of the meeting was devoted to the MNBs reviewing the focus of the previous and upcoming week's information operations activities, sharing initiatives, and discussing issues in their sectors. For example, MNB(W) shared their success with using T-shirts and ball cap handouts at sports events, as a way to attract people to come and listen to the mine awareness presentations. MNBs emphasized the need to do more joint operations and to continue to improve cooperation with UNMIK police and the Russians.

KFOR and the other MNBs did not conduct information operations like MNB(E). The MNB(E) information operations activity was a well-structured process with direct commander interest and involvement. It also brought all of the task force team into the planning and execution. LTC Smith, U.S. Army, was the MNB(E) information operations officer, supported by the LIWA FST led by Major Brown, U.S. Army. The information operations cell reported to the G3 and was located in the G3 plans area of the TOC. Collocation with G3 plans shop ensured that information operations were integrated into all of the plans and allowed the information operations cell to interact with other battle staff on information operations related matters.

The MNB(E) information operations cell participated in and chaired various meetings with the commanders and staff, the KFOR information operations cell, and KFOR IOWG. MNB(E) had its own internal information operations working group chaired by either the information operations officer or LIWA FST Chief. The MNB(E) IOWG served as a forum to exchange information among representatives of the primary staff elements and units involved with conducting the brigade's offensive information operations. The purpose of the information exchange was to coordinate and synchronize the execution of information operations in sector for the upcoming week and to obtain evidence to support accurate assessments of the brigade's IO efforts. The conduct of the various meetings comprised the IO cell's battle rhythm (Figure 1). These meetings were the initial targeting meeting, the target development meeting, the MNB(E) IOWG, the MNB(E) assessment meeting, the KFOR IOWG, the executive targeting meeting, and the commander's decision briefing. A target synchronization matrix directed and synchronized information operations engagements of

specific leaders and population groups in the sector. An information operations execution matrix was used to assign tasks to headquarters assets and subordinate battalions.

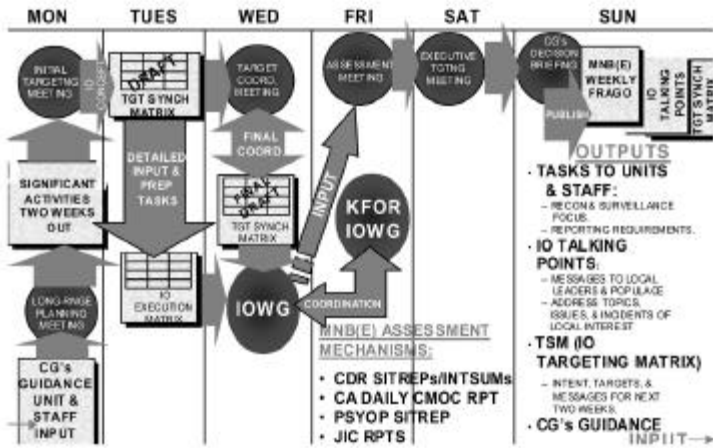


Figure 1. Information Operations Battle Rhythm

The IO cell prepared talking points for senior task force leader discussions with local leaders and supported the Crisis Action Cell (CAC) and QRFs when needed. Additional duties of the MNB(E) IO officer included assisting the OPSEC officer with defensive IO, assessing information-related activities of MNB(E) from an information operations perspective and information protection planning.

UNMIK, OSCE, KFOR, and MNB approaches and products included use of newspapers (including KFOR and MNB funded inserts for local papers), magazines, posters, handbills, radio/television, press conferences and releases, and Internet Web sites. Unlike the Bosnian newspaper *Herald of Peace*, which was published as a single paper in two languages, separate Kosovar newspapers were produced in both Albanian and Serbian languages. UNMIK published the *UNMIK News*, OSCE the *UPDATE*, UNHCR the *Humanitarian News*, KFOR the *KFOR Chronicle*, and at the MNB level the U.S. produced the *K-Forum* and *Falcon Flier*. KFOR also produced a monthly magazine the *Dialogue*. KFOR and the MNB PSYOP teams used posters and handbills extensively (Figure 2) for focused activities, such as land mine and UXO awareness.

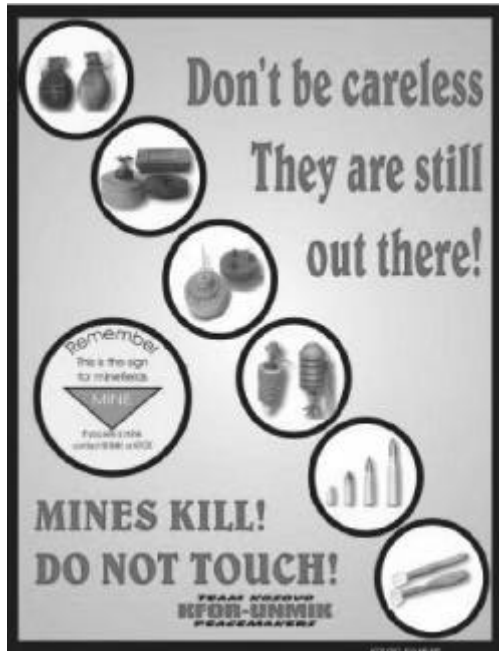


Figure 2. PSYOP Product

KFOR and MNB(E) both funded radio stations and television programming. They used these media to provide Kosovo with popular music, KFOR messages, and talk shows featuring KFOR personnel. The content of the messages disseminated to the public included information from NATO, the U.S. State Department, KFOR, and UNMIK. The MEDCAPs and DENCAPs also interacted with the public by visiting remote communities and providing medical services.

The MNB(E) information operations team also created talking points that addressed key KFOR and MNB(E) sector issues and objectives for the information campaign. Typical subjects addressed a wide range of interest areas such as refugee returns, civil registration, mine awareness, role of Kosovo Police Service, and status of UNSCR 1244. These talking points were updated weekly or as required and distributed by FRAGOs to all levels of command. They served to provide a common perspective and educate those involved in the operation so that while on patrol or engaged in discussions with the local populace and community leaders the soldiers were prepared to discuss in some detail

issues and initiatives. Commanders on the ground viewed this as a very effective tool for their use in conducting operations.

PSYOP

Major Jorge Rangel, U.S. Army, commanded the 315th U.S. Army Reserve PSYOP company. The PSYOP company consisted of a tactical PSYOP detachment with three tactical PSYOP teams (TPT) and a product development detachment (PDD), located on Camp Bondsteel. In order to meet MNB(E) force protection requirements, each TPT consisted of four military personnel plus an interpreter. Frequently, combat camera accompanied TPT deployments, and at times, they helped the TPT meet the force protection requirements by providing the additional vehicles and shooters to meet the two-vehicle and four-shooter configuration for deployment into sector. The PSYOP company consisted of assets capable of disseminating operationally relevant information and associated messages to support the brigade's mission. However, given they actually supported all of the Multinational Task Force objectives (six battalions and a brigade level QRF), it was felt that six teams would have been more appropriate. Some believed the TPTs would have best served the task force if they were stationed with the maneuver battalions around the sector. However, the task force leadership wanted to keep this asset centrally located and controlled.

Although PSYOP used the PDD to develop and produce their own products, they did some local contracting for publishing as well. The tactical PSYOP company did not train for Presidential Decision Directives (PDD) operations or deploy with professional journalist and radio/television broadcasters and technicians as part of the team. The PDD staff stepped up to the challenge and under the circumstances did an outstanding job supporting the brigade. The arrival of 1st AD Mobile Public Affairs detachment in June included a broadcast media specialist who was able to provide professional support to PSYOP. By mid tour, the PDD made the greatest contribution to the over all PSYOP effort because of its good relationships with television and radio stations in the region. The impact of their contribution was largely due to the technical sophistication of the target audience and their willingness to engage the mass media.

The PSYOP team provided the ability to reliably and quickly access and influence the behavior of the target audience in MNB(E) using print media, radio, television, and face-to-face dissemination. The PDD could generate print products in 12 hours or less once approved. Radio scripts could be done in less than 2 hours. Getting product approval for dissemination could take up to 12 days. The process involved review by the G3, information operations cell, Staff Judge Advocate, political advertising (POLAD), and any other applicable staff section with final approval requiring sign off by the Chief of Staff, battalion commanders, and the task force commander.

Although the PDD had its own translators, one of the other big challenges was timely and accurate translation into Albanian and Serbian. CAT I personnel (local hires) often lacked basic translation skills and CAT II personnel (U.S. secret-cleared) with Serbian language skills were hard to come by. It was important to have translators that could accurately comprehend, speak, and write the language.

The purpose of TPTs was to provide ground-truth passive intelligence, establish UNMIK and KFOR credibility, foster cooperation between the Albanians and Serbs, help stabilize the region, eliminate violence, and promote ethnic tolerance. PSYOP personnel conducted engagements directed by the MNB(E) targeting process. All PSYOP soldiers were fully briefed and understood UNSCR 1244, the Task Force Falcon commander's intent, and commander KFOR's intent. This allowed every PSYOP soldier to speak intelligently with civilians about the purpose and intentions of UNMIK and KFOR. PSYOP team leaders spoke directly with community leaders, NGOs, and U.N. organization personnel. This offered them an opportunity to develop a sense of ground-truth and to assess the effects of MNB(E) operations. Senior staff read the TPT situation reports because of the consistent value of the (passively) obtained information.

The battle rhythm was demanding. The TPTs deployed into sector 6 days a week and at times on Sunday as well. In addition to supporting QRFs, TPTs were also used to support special events, such as the 1-year anniversary of the liberation of Kosovo. Many of these occurred on Sundays. They also supported cordon and search missions where weapons were confiscated. In these cases, the TPTs deployed with loudspeakers in order to help the maneuver battalion with crowd control should a disturbance occur. The PDD staff of seven supported 17 to 19

live radio shows per week and 1 to 2 television shows. These activities presented a variety of guests and topics all aimed at maintaining support for KFOR and NATO forces at work in the region. In addition, the PDD developed 5 to 7 print documents weekly and a newsletter, the *K-FORUM*. PSYOP participated in the daily BUBs and held staff meetings Monday through Saturday. They participated in the task force targeting meetings and information operations working groups, including representing MNB(E) at the weekly KFOR-sponsored PSYOP working group. MNB(E) PSYOP team also launched a cross training exchange with the German, UK (referred to as Shadow Element) and French PSYOP elements. In September, PSYOP conducted a media conference in which local Serbian and Albanian media providers came to Camp Bondsteel to discuss relevant media issues. Because of this effort, an Albanian station agreed to fax daily news bulletins to a Serbian station. All participants agreed that future conferences would be beneficial. PSYOP personnel also provided the TFF ACE through daily situation reports relevant information (passive intelligence) on topics and issues germane to the MNB(E) mission.

PSYOP fliers were distributed to the public as different needs or events arose. For example, fliers explained to the residents of Strpce that a recent attack on the UNMIK office was an attack against KFOR and would result in sanctions against the community. Fliers announced curfews, explained KFOR actions, and promoted community-building initiatives. Using a Risograph, the PDD produced handbills such as the *K-FORUM*, a one page, front and back newsletter. The news articles were not generally written by the PDD staff, but from open sources. The *K-FORUM* was produced in Albanian, Serbian, and English. Since many the small towns did not have access to news media other than radio and television broadcasts from Serbia, the *K-FORUM* gave them the news of Kosovo. While in sector with a TPT, one of the major points made by the residents of the small village visited was the desire to get access to reading material. They were quite pleased to receive the handouts from the TPT, which also included the *Dialogue*, the KFOR magazine produced in Pristina. For a while, excess *Stars and Stripes* newspapers were distributed throughout the sector.

The MNB(E) PAO published *Falcon Flier* was also given to locals when it was available. Posters addressed a variety of issues, such as reporting crime, the KFOR and local veterinarian program to capture stray dogs, and mine awareness. KFOR placed ads in newspapers such

as the Albanian *Fer Press* in Urosevac. One such ad called for an end to violence and contained a picture (taken by combat camera in the operating room of the MASH hospital on Camp Bondsteel) of an 8-year-old girl who had been shot (Figure 3). Over time, the *Fer Press* proved unpopular with the public and MNB(E) ceased to use it.



Figure 3. PSYOP Product for *Fer Press*



Figure 4. Thumbs Up for KFOR

Along with presence patrols conducted by the maneuver battalions, face-to-face PSYOP was a significant operational capability. The three MNB(E) TPTs were used to provide coverage throughout the brigade sectors including the areas controlled by the Russians, Poles and Greeks. The TPTs distributed PSYOP products, conducted loudspeaker operations, and held face-to-face sessions with the public. Loudspeakers were used for crowd control as well as information campaigns. For example, the “Thumbs up for KFOR” (Figure 4) information campaign that was aimed at trying to stop children from coming up to KFOR vehicles and trying to give or receive a high five from the soldiers. There were some that felt the campaign also aimed at countering the use of the three-finger VJ victory sign by the Serbian children. TPT personnel were trained for personal contact with the public, and were effective in persuading and influencing public perceptions of KFOR. They were also able to assess the immediate effects of their engagements and detect changes in behaviors and attitudes in later visits to the communities.

While face-to-face communication with the locals was the most effective means of PSYOP, television and radio were the best ways to communicate with the majority of the population. Face-to-face is a precision, high impact method of administering the message of the commander. Radio and television allowed PSYOP to convey the commander’s message more effectively to the mass of the population, thereby promoting support for KFOR on a wider scale.

In addition to producing and disseminating fliers, handbills, posters, and other print products, the PSYOP company was capable of producing radio and television programming. Local radio stations were contracted to broadcast MNB(E) information and messages (Figure 5). There were two Serbian radio stations, Radio Max in Silovo and Radio Zupa in Brezovica. I was able to visit Radio Max one evening with Staff Sergeant McCarthy. Radio Max was a husband and wife run radio station located in their home, which was under construction in a Serbian enclave. PSYOP paid for airtime and provided the station with CDs, KFOR announcements, and scripts.



Figure 5. PSYOP Sponsored Radio Station

There were seven Albanian stations under contract: Radio Festina in Urosevac, Radio Victoria in Gnjilane, Radio Iliria in Vitina, Radio TEMA in Urosevac, Radio Energji in Gnjilane, Radio Pozaranje in Pozaranje, and Radio Kacanik in Kacanik. UNMIK ran a joint Albanian/ Serbian radio station in Kamenica. I was able to visit this station, which was located in the UNMIK building. To my surprise, there were two collocated sound booths, one Serbian and one Albanian, for the broadcasters. A glass partition separated them (Figure 6). The terrain and cost were too restrictive to initially set up full AOR radio coverage, so several small stations were used to achieve limited coverage to get things started. The number of contracted radio stations grew from 6 regional stations in April 2000 to 14 by the end of July with coverage that extended to all 7 municipalities across the brigade's sector. As the number of stations grew, the PSYOP company took advantage of the opportunities to expand broadcast coverage for dissemination of information and messages to support the MNB(E) mission.



Figure 6. Combined Serbian and Albanian Radio Broadcast Booths

The first operational Kosovar television station in sector, an Albanian station television Vali in Gnjilane, did a couple of KFOR broadcasts in May but did not reemerge until July 2000. Given the new television capability, the PSYOP Company was preparing to initiate a similar vigorous effort with television broadcasting as they did with radio. The most popular program was the live Four Pillars show, which featured the local KFOR commander and representatives from UNMIK, UNMIK police, UNHCR, and OSCE. These shows were normally scheduled for 1 hour, but often went on for 2 to 3 hours and in many cases had to be cut off after several hours of broadcasting. The shows were successful because authoritative principles from important organizations were present and questions on most any subject were answered with credibility.

In addition to producing radio public service announcements, the PSYOP company scheduled and prepared MNB(E) headquarters personnel for appearance on live radio shows. The PSYOP company and the information operations cell coordinated each week on topics, facts, and messages appropriate for public service announcements and radio shows. Meetings were held after shows in which call-in questions were received from the local populace in order to ensure follow-up facts and messages were addressed in later appearances. By July 2000, each task

force maneuver battalion commander had a contracted radio station available in his sector to conduct weekly live radio shows.

At the time of the departure of the 315th, they were doing 17 to 19 live radio shows per week and 1 or 2 television shows. These shows covered a wide range of topics and important KFOR communicators:

- Commanders, soldier shows, and information operations;
- Medical, dental, veterinarian, and pre-natal care;
- Preventative medicine, substance abuse, and nutrition;
- NGOs and UNMIK four pillars;
- Psychological trauma;
- Rule of law, legal issues in the region, and finance;
- English;
- Farming;
- U.S. History and education;
- Weekly operations updates; and
- Children's stories.

Translating and interpreting live on the air was dangerous because hasty translations would leave room for error when accuracy was of highest importance. There were plans to get some broadcast delay equipment to support live call-in radio talk shows.

The weekly MNB(E) information operations working group provided a good source of feedback from those in the field who were able to sense local population sensitivities and changes and views of the products disseminated. Face-to-face interactions with leaders and local residents and building trust relationships with these people provided a means to get honest feedback. The KFOR information operations and PSYOP working groups were good forums for obtaining feedback. Open source literature was reviewed and radio shows and other media were monitored. There was a weekly coordination meeting with OSCE who

had an extensive media monitoring activity. Behavior change takes time and some changes would not become evident immediately.



Figure 7. KFOR Headquarters

While in Prizren for a KFOR-sponsored information operations working group, I met LTC Grade, German military. As the chief of the KFOR PSYOP support element, he was in Prizren to chair the KFOR-sponsored PSYOP working group. In response to an invitation to visit KFOR headquarters to discuss KFOR PSYOP activities, a trip was made to Film City, the home of KFOR headquarters. Film City was a film studio (Figure 7) located on a hill overlooking the city of Pristina. There were some first impressions of KFOR headquarters that served as a reminder that contrasts in Kosovo also exist within the KFOR military establishments. After having spent several weeks at Camp Bondsteel and deploying into sector multiple times with U.S. forces, a few things struck me as being different as I arrived at KFOR headquarters. As I entered the main gate, I saw a street lined on both sides with national PXs that sold anything from alcohol to souvenirs. Second, soldiers were not wearing helmets, flack vests, or carrying weapons. In fact, some of the multinational military uniforms were shorts, not battle dress uniforms (BDUs). Third, although there was certainly heavy force protection around the base perimeter, soldiers were free to walk on and off the base subject to having appropriate identification. Soldiers were also free to eat and drink at local establishments and buy from vendors on the streets, in shops and outside the main gate to KFOR. The pace

of KFOR headquarters operations was busy but certainly less hectic than MNB(E) headquarters activities. It was almost like being on a base in Germany, a stark contrast to MNB(E)'s high OPTEMPO and strict force protection.

The KFOR PSYOP support element (PSE) reported to the chief of the Information Campaign (IC), who in turn reported to the KFOR assistant chief of staff for operations. The PSE was generally focused on the Pristina area, rather than all of Kosovo. This lack of comprehensive focus led to the MNBs being vastly different in their approaches to PSYOP. NATO funding was not sufficient to have the PSE assume a leading role in the information campaign. Reporting to the IC chief was an IO coordination section who were responsible for long-range planning and current operations. France, Spain, and the UK did not participate in the PSE. Germany, Denmark, Belgium, Italy, U.S., and Romania were the contributing nations. The PSE operated the KFOR owned print, radio, and television assets and coordinated the theater-wide PSYOP campaign with the MNBs. The primary means of coordination was the weekly KFOR sponsored PSYOP working group that rotated its meetings between KFOR headquarters and the headquarters of the MNBs.

KFOR taped radio programs and monitored their quality to be sure that the script sent was used and that local stations did not use them out of context. The products were written in English first and then translated. UNMIK, OSCE, and the MNBs conducted media monitoring and KFOR tried not to overreact to propaganda. KFOR was truthful and distributed pragmatic information. The general rule was, "do not react to disinformation, react to selective issues of importance."

There were plans to expand the KFOR PSE from a small, largely military team to a staff of 53 that included civilians as well as military. In order to improve the effectiveness of the operation they needed better continuity, given the high turnover rate of the KFOR military personnel. In addition, they needed to build a professional journalist and radio/television production staff for the longer term. The military would cover 32 positions and 21 would be a local civilian mix of Serbs and Albanians. There would be 12 staff covering radio, 2 for television, and the rest would cover the print media. The PSE had four interpreters and could use the KFOR command group interpreters as well. The military staff would rotate and civilian staff would provide the continuity.

Some Observations

Assessment of information operations effectiveness was extremely difficult. Attempts to do so were highly subjective and dependent upon interpretation. Every 3 months, Gallop conducted a survey of Pristina and Metrovica, which estimated the number people that saw and used the KFOR products. OSCE provided daily and weekly reports on radio, television, and print media activities. All units who interacted with the public also contributed their insights and observations from the field.

There were a number of early KFOR PSE issues to be addressed. The experience, education and training of the military staff assigned to the PSE varied and generally did not adequately cover unique aspects of the operation, such as culture, religion, and politics. The MNBs saw themselves as independent and there was a need to better integrate and leverage KFOR and cross-MNB PSYOP activities. The assets and experience of the MNBs were quite different as well. Two had good access to radio and television and some had none. Radio and print experts were needed to compete with local media. KFOR and the MNBs needed professional journalists and broadcasters. The initial information operations and PSYOP capabilities at KFOR lacked the expertise that KFOR was trying to develop. KFOR had an excellent relationship with Radio Television Kosovo (RTK). They relied on the local RTK television expertise, since this was something their own staff lacked. In order to develop a capability, KFOR established a training program with RTK to educate their television staff. They were using internships to train their staff. KFOR had good relationships with the local radio stations as well. CJ2 screened civilian candidates recommended by UNMIK, RTK and others for the PSE openings. Candidates needed to provide documentation on personal background, expertise, and demonstrate certain skills.

Other challenges included the Serbian Red Cross, which was essentially funded and controlled by the Serbs. It was reported that they were taking USAID and other international aid packages and covering the source markings with Serbian Red Cross markings before distributing to the Kosovar Serb community. Russian soldiers in Kamenica region were reported to be displaying the three-finger VJ victory sign to the local Albanian population. It did not serve to improve their image, and further created tensions between Albanians and Serbs, especially when

the children started returning the symbol to the Russians and other KFOR forces. Joint U.S. and Russian patrols were conducted to portray unity of effort and an MNB(E) information center was opened in Kamenica, these combined efforts served to enhance the acceptance of the Russian forces in the area.